

Message Text

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ACTION ERDA-07

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FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

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TAGS: TECH AG

SUBJECT: BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON FOREIGN ENERGY PROGRAMS: ALGERIA

REF: (A) STATE 100797, (B) ALGIERS 0061

1. FOLLOWING RESPONSES ARE KEYED TO QUESTIONS IN REFTEL:

A. STRUCTURE. GOVERNMENTAL CONTROL OVER ENERGY TECHNOLOGY AND R AND D IN ALGERIA IS DIVIDED BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND ENERGY (MIE) AND THE MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. TWO NATIONAL CORPORATIONS, SONATRACH AND SONELGAZ, WHICH ARE UNDER THE MIE, ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OPERATING PROGRAMS IN LIQUID HYDROCARBONS AND EXPORT OF GAS (IN CASE OF SONATRACH) AND ELECTRICITY AND DOMESTIC USE OF GAS (IN CASE OF SONELGAZ).

SONELGAZ IS NOW EXPLORING NUCLEAR GENERATION PROGRAMS WITH U.S. COMPANIES (SEE REF B). ENERGY RESEARCH ACTIVITIES ARE UNDER MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH. ALGERIAN INSTITUTE OF NUCLEAR STUDIES REPORTS TO THIS MINISTRY.

B. ENERGY POLICY.

I. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF MINOR IMPORTS OF CERTAIN PETROLEUM PRODUCTS, ALGERIA IS SELF-SUFFICIENT IN ENERGY. IT WILL REMAIN THAT WAY FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

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II. CURRENT EMPHASIS IN ENERGY R AND D IS CLEARLY

IN NUCLEAR FIELD. WE ARE INFORMED THAT ALGERIA HAS TECHNICIANS STUDYING UNDER IAEA PROGRAMS IN U.K., AND PLANS (UNDER SEPARATE PROGRAMS) TO SEND MANY MORE STUDENTS FOR TRAINING IN U.S. BOTHIN TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC ASPECTS OF NUCLEAR FIELD (SEE REFB). EMPHASIS IN THIS AREA HAS INCREASED IN PAST SIX MONTHS.

III. ALL ENERGY R AND D WORK IS CARRIED OUT IN GOVERNMENT LABORATORIES.

IV. THERE ARE NO JOINT-GOVERNMENT-PRIVATE ENERGY R AND D PROGRAMS THAT WE ARE AWARE OF.

V. PRIVATE INDUSTRY IS NOT ACTIVE IN ENERGY R AND D IN ALGERIA.

VIM WE HAVE NO INFORMATION ON LEGISLATION AFFECTING R AND D PROGRAMS.

2. A. STATUS AND OUTLOOK. WE BELIEVE ALGERIAN ENERGY R AND D PROGRAMS AT MOMENT ARE CONFINED TO TRAINING GROUP OF PEOPLE THAT CAN UNDERSTAND NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY, WITH AIRM OF SUPERVISING THE BUILDING OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS IN ALGERIA AT SOME TIME IN FUTURE. SOLAR ENERGY SEEMS LOGICAL CANDIDATE FOR RAND D; HOWEVER, WE HAVE SEEN NO EVIDENCE OF ALGERIAN INTEREST IN THIS AREA.

B. THE BUDGET IS NOT PUBLISHED IN SUFFICIENT DETAIL TO YIELD USEFUL DATA ON R AND D EXPENDITURES.

3. INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES:

I. ALGERIA IS A MEMBER OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY. IT SEEMS TO BE AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT FROM WHAT EMBASSY CAN OBSERVE.

II. WE KNOW OF NO INTERNATIONAL ENERGY R AND D AGREEMENTS TO WHICH ALGERIA IS A PARTY. PARKER

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